



United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates' National Report
on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and
Platform for Action
Unofficial Translation
Beijing + 25

2019

Index

Theme	Page
Introduction	4
Section I: General analysis of achievements and challenges	
which have been in place since 1995.	5
1- Emirati women and work in the private sector.	5
2- Gender equality	7
3- Women with disabilities.	10
Section II: Progress in the implementation of critical areas of concern	
On the Platform for Action since 2014.	14
A. The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women	14
B. Education and training of women	17
C. Women and Health	19
D. Violence against women	20
E. Women and armed conflict	23
F. Women and the Economy	25
G. Women in positions of power and decision-making	27
H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women	29

Theme	Page
I. Women's rights	32
J. Women and the media	36
K. Women and the environment	39
L. Girls	42
Section III: Data and Statistics	45
Section IV: Emerging priorities	47

Introduction

The General Women's Union, in cooperation with the federal and local government institutions, and civil society organizations, prepared this national report, drawing on the information provided by relevant federal and local ministries and agencies, along with several non-governmental organizations.

Since the United Arab Emirates (UAE) adopted the recommendations of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, the UAE has been developing national strategies, plans, and programs of action to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The State had submitted national reports within the framework of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, 2000, on the achievements and major obstacles encountered in the implementation process since 1995. During that period, the UAE ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2004 and submitted its reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Twenty-five years after the Beijing Conference, the UAE is now evaluating and reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, including the current challenges affecting the implementation of the Platform for Action, gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as opportunities for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women within the framework of the goals of sustainable development and the 2030 Plan of Action for Sustainable Development by including a specific goal for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls; and the commission on the Status of Women of the United Nations in 2020.

SECTION I: GENERAL ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES SINCE 1995

1- Women and the private sector:

The UAE highly prioritizes its strategic objectives. The UAE, since its formation, established the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of its formation to regulate labor relations and to enable citizens to work in the private sector without exception. The UAE issued a Law No. (8) in order to organize Labor relations and made amendments to them in line with the developments in the labor market. The ministry is responsible for shaping general policy, for ensuring citizen hires in the labor market, supervising its implementation, monitoring and evaluating the process of employing citizens in the private sector, and preparing programs for training and qualifying citizens seeking work. It also coordinated training and education programs with the country's educational and training institutions in accordance with the requirements of the labor market and supervision of the category of service workers in accordance with the legislation governing this category.

The role and importance of the private sector have increased in recent years. This is in line with the UAE's announcement of the Government's 2021 strategy and Vision 2070. The Ministry has been encouraging the private sector to play an essential role in investment and employment. Regarding nationalization, the Ministry was entrusted to implement seven main functions related to nationalization, in accordance with Federal Law Decree No. 14 of 2016, which included:

- 1- To formulate the general policy for the nationalization of human resources in the labor market and supervise its implementation.
- 2- Providing advice and professional guidance to the national workforce.
- 3- Following-up and evaluating the employment of nationals in the private sector.
- 4- Supporting and encouraging nationals' work and granting them the opportunities.
- 5- Supporting small investment institutions through the implementation of self-employment projects for national human resources.
- 6- Preparing programs for training and qualifying nationals seeking work.
- 7- Coordinating and directing the training and educational programs of the country's institutions in accordance with the requirements of the labor market.

The Ministry has identified four main procedures or controls for the private sector employers to follow upon hiring:

- 1- Registering nationals in the pension fund, in accordance with the existing legal regulations in the country.
- 2- Ensuring that the insurance file of the employee is updated within six months from the employment approval date.
- 3- Compliance with the terms of termination of employment between the worker and the establishment.
- 4- The employer's obligation to deliver the end of service interview report upon termination of the contractual employment to determine the reasons.

These measures have facilitated the enrollment of Emirati women in the labor market of private sector. Recent data show that women have reached 57% of all UAE nationals employed in the private sector. The private sector has witnessed an increasing number of Emirati women in senior positions, where 33% of them are employed in high-skill occupations. According to statistics, Emirati women received the highest percentage of job opportunities offered by the Ministry in 2017, which is about 62% of the total 6,000 jobs. The goal was to target 1,530 private sector enterprises and facilities to nationalize 212 jobs. The ministry is also expanding its work to target more than 2,000 establishments operating in strategic sectors, with 400 jobs designated as priority for recruitment.

It should be noted that women participation in the federal government is higher than in the private sector, since the public sector offers better benefits. Therefore, women tend to work in the public sector more. The ratio of women working in the federal government is about 44% of Civil positions, 41% of the leadership positions, 69% of the educational and its support sector, and 73% of the medical and its support sector. However, the government is working to correct the structure of the private sector in line with vision 2021.

Challenges:

The work environment in the private sector is not as attractive to nationals in general and specifically women. The number of women working in the private sector is very limited, despite the changes introduced by the UAE to labor legislations and policies, and the structuring of the Ministry of Labor. The reason is that incentives, such as wages and the working environment, do not suit the needs of Emirati women to work in the private sector, let alone the preventive measures taken by private sector institutions to overcome the

legislative and moral obligation and circumventing them by resorting to ways that enable them to benefit from nationals through getting help from external sources .

2- Gender equality:

Women in the UAE enjoy the same constitutional rights as men, and the Government has undertaken many initiatives to empower women in all fields. The UAE ranks second among Arab countries in terms of gender equality.

Article 14 of the UAE Constitution provides for equality and social justice and the provision of security, tranquility and equal opportunities for all citizens. Based on the principle of equality in this text, women are essential partners in the development process, and there is no discrimination between them and men. Article 15 of the Constitution guarantees the protection of the family, where women are of crucial importance. This article states that "the family is the basis of society, and it is based on religion, morality and patriotism. The law guarantees its existence and protects it from deviation." This means that all apparatus are employed to achieve this principle and to maintain the family entity, especially the judicial, legislative, social system, and all laws and regulations.

In addition, Article 16 added provisions for the protection of family members. In order to build a healthy family, the UAE adopted several policies reflected in the form of laws and legislations that would protect the affairs of Emirati women, especially those who may be subjected to family pressures that make them face obstacles in the way of marriage for independence, or raising the dowry by her legal guardian.

In 2015, the UAE established the Gender Balance Council, which seeks to reduce the gender gap in employment, strengthen the UAE's position in the Global Competitiveness Reports, and to transform the UAE into a landmark for gender equality. It reviews, proposes, and updates legislation, policies, and programs to achieve gender equality in the workplace. It also recommends activating regulations, resolutions, and international conventions relating to gender equality in employment, to eliminate discrimination against women. The Council aims to review and follow up on the Global Competitiveness Reports and other international reports, in addition to developing recommendations to narrow the gender gap in the workplace. The Council then proposes gender equality indicators and submits them to the Council of Ministers for adoption and works with local authorities to achieve gender equality in society. It also supports the status of the state globally, as the Government determined the goals at this level.

The Gender Balance Council has created the Gender Equality Manual, the first federal manual of its kind, in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The guide was prepared based on several OECD recommendations on gender equality in public life in 2015, and its recommendations in 2013 on gender equality in education, employment, and entrepreneurship.

The UAE Gender Balance Council is implementing the Gender Equality Index, which is issued annually by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to strengthen the UAE's efforts in women empowerment and participation in various national and development works, in line with the Vision 2021. It also oversees the equality index, and seeks to find the best formulas that ensure the highest levels of coordination between the state institutions and its various agencies to achieve the desired goals of gender equality, and raise the rank of the UAE to be among the best 25 countries in the world in this domain by 2021 .

According to the 2016 World Economic Forum report on closing the gender gap , the UAE has achieved the following international rankings:

- Ranked eighth in the sub-index on equal pay for equal work.
- Ranked first in the literacy sub-index.
- Ranked first in the secondary education sub-index.
- Ranked first in the sub-index on the sex ratio at birth (female to male).

In November 2018, during the annual cabinet meetings, the UAE launched a national program on alternative employment options for women and recommended the launching of an improved legislation package that supports efforts to make the UAE a global model of gender equality and promote women's participation in the private sector. The Government is working on developing initiatives aimed at introducing policies and legislation that support the gender equality agenda, which is one of the important issues on the national agenda, by limiting current legislation, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and proposing new legislation to increase the participation of women in the public and private sectors, and linking the results of this legislation with the UAE vision 2021.

A working group was formed to monitor the country's agenda on women's empowerment and gender equality, by releasing an annual report to support the goals of sustainable development, in order to achieve the principle of equal opportunities between the sexes, where the UAE would be a pioneer in this sector, and a role model in the implementation of supporting legislation. Empowering women in the workplace, providing them with equal opportunities in leadership positions, and developing policies to support their involvement in the

private sector, are a central government trend aimed at supporting the gender equality file. The monitoring results showed that the UAE government has reached important global achievements, most importantly that it closed the gap in all university stages, secondary schools, and literacy. Women's ratio in ministerial representation reached 29%, 17% in the boards of government, and 20% of the total number of employees in the diplomatic and consular corps at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

On 8 March 2015, Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, President of the General Women's Union launched the National Strategy for the Empowerment and Entrepreneurship of Women in the UAE 2015-2021. The National Strategy provides a framework for government, private, and civil society to develop plans and programs of action that contribute to making the UAE one of the most advanced countries in the field of women's empowerment and leadership.

The National Strategy for the Empowerment of Women 2015-2021 includes four main priorities:

- To maintain the sustainability of Emirati women's achievements, and to continue to achieve more gains.
- To preserve the social fabric and cohesion through the integration of roles between men and women to build a strong and cohesive society capable of keeping up with the new changes.
- To provide the fundamentals of a decent and safe life, and the social well-being with high quality basis for women.
- To develop the spirit of leadership and responsibility, and to strengthen the status of Emirati women in regional and international forums.

The General Women's Union, in cooperation with the cabinet, is to follow up on the implementation of this strategy, which provides for a legislative and institutional framework supportive of women, in line with best practices of women's empowerment, and consistent with the State's commitments to international charters and treaties and the adoption of sound policies to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels .

Challenges:

The State is making strenuous efforts to achieve gender equality at all levels in the UAE. This is evident in the international indicators. However, the true source of this equality is women, which

requires them to build their capacities and to compete against men in all sectors. In the last two elections of the Federal National Council, it has been noted that women have lost the opportunity of being elected, despite the great amenities that the country provides to women in order to achieve electoral gains. The conditions surrounding women and family life remain an obstacle, which requires the government to accelerate the development of legislation and policies that guarantee women economic participation in a manner that balances their needs.

3- Women with disabilities (determination)

In accordance with the National Policy for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, the UAE Government decided to re-designate this category as people of determination, in recognition of their positive efforts that contribute to achievements and gains, and overcome all challenges in various vital fields in the country.

His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, issued the Federal Law No. 29 of 2006 on the Rights of Persons with Special Needs, which consists of 39 articles that affirm the rights of this category in providing services, equality, and non-discrimination due to special needs, in accordance with the applicable state legislation. The law emphasizes the importance of treating this category with humanitarian means and providing appropriate assistance in case of inability to pay court fees, expenses, and fines. The law also aims to guarantee the rights of the person with special needs and to provide all services within the limits of his abilities. Having special needs should not be a reason to prevent the person from obtaining these rights and services, especially in the field of social, economic, health, educational, professional, cultural, and promotional activities.

The UAE has also ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Emirate of Dubai has enacted Law No. 2 of 2014 on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The UAE ensures that persons with special needs have equal rights, and legislations do not discriminate against them based on their special needs. It also consider them in all economic and social development policies and programs and take appropriate measures to prevent discrimination based on special needs.

The UAE has guaranteed to the persons of special needs the right to express their opinion using Braille, sign language, or other means of communication; and their right to seek, receive and convey information on an

equal basis with others. In 2018, the UAE launched the Emirati Sign Language Dictionary for the Deaf. The dictionary compiles the terms of the local UAE sign language, and it documents them in a unified dictionary that aims to serve the persons with special needs, especially deaf persons, and integrate them into the society, and disseminate their language to ensure its continuation and growth. The dictionary has 5000 words used to teach and integrate both male and female deaf students. It is a major reference that assists in the preparation and qualification of sign language interpreters among UAE nationals. This achievement comes within the framework of the goals of the UAE Vision 2021 and national agenda, and the quest to promote a cohesive society that is proud of its identity and belonging, by providing a comprehensive environment that integrates all different segments of society.

The UAE guarantees equal opportunities of education to the persons with special needs, within all educational institutions, vocational training, adult education, and continuing education, within the regular classes or in special classes, if necessary, with the syllabus in Braille, sign language, or any other method as appropriate. The Ministry of Education offers several training programs and facilities designed to meet the needs of children with special needs, their parents, and kindergarten teachers. These programs include guidelines for dealing with people with visual and hearing disabilities, talent identification programs, introduction to sign language, and speech impediments experienced by children. The Ministry has also established support centers to monitor and evaluate the progress made by children before and after school integration. These centers offer various services including diagnosis of students with disabilities on an individual level, learning difficulties, recommendations, and help parents to deal with the situation of their child, and direct them to the resources that provide appropriate support services for their child.

Every citizen with special needs has the right to benefit from health services, rehabilitation, and support services at the expense of the State. Nationals with special needs have the right to work and to hold public office. Having special needs does not constitute an obstacle to the candidacy and selection of a job. When tests of efficiency to join the work are administered, they shall consider those with special needs subject to the provisions of Law No. 29 of 2006. In order to facilitate the employment of persons with special needs, the Ministry of Community Development has established an employment platform for the of persons with disabilities, particularly designed for institutions and individuals. In 2019, the Ministry launched workshops projects to enable girls with special needs to be part of the integrated employment. The workshops include

several projects: “Tasnim” chocolate factory, “Reused” to reuse already used materials, “Munasabati” for printing, “Jana” for organic and aquatic agriculture, “Adasati” for photography, and “Qlala” for accessories and jewelry. These workshops projects provide employment programs, along with the vocational training, and a social and behavioral program on work ethics and professional behavior, in addition to an entertainment program for the discharge of energies and integration into society. The project aims to allow these girls to integrate with their colleagues and develop their social and behavioral skills to the maximum extent possible.

The Human Resources and Labor Laws issued in the UAE shall specify the procedures to be taken to ensure that persons with special needs are employed in public and private sectors. It also specifies the working hours, vacations, and other provisions related to the work of the person with special needs, including those necessary for termination of employment and entitlement to a pension.

The State has taken all necessary measures to achieve the participation of persons with special needs in cultural, sports and recreational life, and to promote the participation of the persons with special needs in organized sporting activities at the national, regional and global levels. For this purpose, “The People of Determination Retreat” was held in March 2019, along with hosting the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi 2019. This comes to enhance the empowerment of persons with disabilities, and to mobilize efforts and capabilities to support them in all programs and national sectors.

The retreat was attended by Their Highnesses, Ministers, national figures, in addition to a number of persons with special needs and social specialists. At the conclusion of the retreat, more than 31 national initiatives and programs were adopted to support the future of persons with special needs and enable their interaction in various sectors. The retreat devoted 8 main axes to empowering and enhancing the future of persons with special needs at all levels:

- Sports.
- Quality of life.
- Education and employment.
- International Representation.
- Health.
- Culture.

- Prospect Services.
- Media.

Each person with special needs has the right to a qualifying environment and access to places where others can access. The UAE has many centers, clubs and governmental and private institutions that deal with the status of persons with disabilities, and provide them with education, training, and rehabilitation. The Ministry of Community Development is responsible for issuing licenses to institutions and centers working in the field of care, education, and training of persons with special needs. It also develops programs and methods of care and rehabilitation, and prepares professional training programs and supervises their implementation. By the end of 2018, the number of cards issued by the Ministry of Community Development was "19453" cards, of which 11811 cards were for citizens, and 7642 cards were for residents from different nationalities. The female persons with special needs were issued 7028 cards, while males were issued 12425 cards nationwide.

The Dubai Community Development Authority (CDA) operates in accordance with "My Community" initiative. Dubai is planning to become a city friendly for people with disabilities by 2020, where the Global Environment Facility is implemented to facilitate services and raise standards that safeguard the rights of people with disabilities, which will contribute to establish a clear policy of protection, in accordance with The International Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities and UAE Federal Law and in activating their requirements. The Commission conducted comparative studies on the integration of persons with disabilities with the most advanced societies in this domain. The Dubai Center for Child Development provides early intervention services through individual and group rehabilitation sessions in accordance with the intervention plan for the child and the family. The center's specialists provide the necessary support for the family and children to integrate them with their peers in kindergartens and regular schools (not specific to schools of persons with disabilities)

Challenges:

Women with disabilities face some challenges in the work environment, most notably the lack of readiness of workplaces to employ them, and the absence of special mechanisms for conducting job interviews for persons of concern. In some cities, women with disabilities need to strengthen infrastructure and health services that correspond to their needs.

PART II: PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION SINCE 2014

A- The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women

The UAE is classified as a high-income country with a growing economy through the International Monetary Fund. The UAE ranked 20th in the world on the Statista index (www.statista.com) in 2017, Statista is a German Web site for the Country's GDP per capita. According to the index, the UAE's GDP per capita in 2017 was \$40,162. *Statista* predicts that GDP per capita in the UAE will increase steadily in 2019 and in the next year 2020, reaching \$ 41,182 and then \$ 42,053, respectively. *Statista* is one of the world's leading portals for the dissemination of statistics, research and economic studies worldwide.

The Ministry of Finance approved the general budget of the Federation for the fiscal year 2018 at a cost of 51.4 billion AED, an increase of 5.6% over the total budget appropriations for the previous fiscal year 2017. The budget of the Federation for the fiscal year 2018 was distributed to the main sectors in the country, which is (26.3) billion AED (43.5%) of the total budget. While the general government sector allocated 22.1 billion AED (36.5%) of the total budget.

It should be noted here that social welfare is not limited to the budget of the UAE, but each Emirate allocates a budget to the citizens residing in it. The Ministry of Community Development oversees the implementation of the social welfare system in the UAE. The Ministry also provides financial support to women in the country according to their needs, especially women in remote areas for their economic and social security. The government also supports social welfare and rehabilitation centers, providing assistance to the needy and to people with disabilities.

The Ministry issues monetary compensation to citizens for their losses due to personal or natural disasters. The amount of assistance in the case of property losses due to disasters or public and private disasters, would be at least 50% and not more than 80% of the value of actual losses. The Ministry also provides urgent assistance such as shelter, food and clothing. The Ministry, within a period of not more than two days from the date of notification of the disaster, whether public or private, arranges emergency relief to assist the affected

families. The financial assistance carried out in cash shall be 300 AED per person per day. Article (2) of the Social Security Law No. (13) of 1972 defines the social categories entitled to aid in the following categories:

- Widows
- Divorced women.
- Abandoned Women
- Orphans
- Children of unknown parentage.
- Persons of disability
- Persons over sixty years old.
- Financially incapable persons, unable to provide for themselves or their families due to lack of income.
- Married students
- Prisoners' families
- Emirati women who have married non-citizens, and the husband is unable to provide for his family due to reasons outside their control.

The Ministry of Community Development provides social assistance in many ways to Emirati citizens who are unable to earn a sufficient income to achieve a decent living for themselves and their family. Pursuant to Federal Law No. (2) of 2001, monthly financial assistance is provided to the following categories of UAE nationals residing in the UAE:

- Widows.
- Divorced women.
- Persons with disabilities.
- The elderly.
- Orphans.
- Children of unknown parentage.
- persons afflicted with an incapacitating infirmity.
- Married students.
- Prisoners' families.
- physically disabled.

- Abandoned women.
- Emirati Women who have married non-citizens, who are unable to earn their livelihood for reasons beyond their control.

The number of women recipients of social assistance provided by the Ministry of Community Development reached about 36,870 women with a financial value of about AED 1.169.745.710 in 2015, and the number of beneficiaries decreased to 28.449, while the subsidy increased to 1.822.357.593 AED in 2016.

The Abu Dhabi Department of Community Development (ADDCD) launched the Abu Dhabi Social Support Programme, which provides financial support and to citizens of low-income families, which is part of the Abu Dhabi Accelerated Development Programme (ADDP).

The Community Development Authority in Dubai (CDA) provides many social benefits to the citizens of Dubai, such as the periodic benefit of supplementary assistance to the head of household to meet the basic living needs of eligible citizens. In addition to the one-time disbursement of AED 50.000 for medical care and education. The emergency benefit is disbursed in the amount of AED 25.000 in cash for emergency circumstances, resulting in a threat to the individual's well-being. The Community Development Authority provides assistance to those with low incomes to furnish homes and equip them with new air conditioners.

The Ministry of Presidential Affairs provides a range of benefits eligible to UAE nationals; they can apply online for social assistance, land and housing. The National Small and Medium Enterprises Program of the Ministry of Economy organized the Small and Medium Enterprises Exhibition, on 29 and 30 April 2019 in Abu Dhabi, and announced the existence of new banking facilities and financing programs for small and medium enterprises throughout the country, starting from AED 500 thousand to AED 5 million, in collaboration with 7 national banks. The Emirates Bank for Development will secure loans by 70% for existing and licensed companies in the UAE at competitive interest rates to support SMEs and entrepreneurs, as well as a series of training and development programs and other activities that accompanied the first exhibition of small and medium enterprises.

On the 22 and 23 of April, the Emirates Environmental Education Group organized the 19th edition of the Environmental Public Speaking Competition 2019 at the Dubai Knowledge Park, with the participation of 68 teams, 450 students and teaching staff from schools throughout the country as part of its April 22 Earth Day celebrations, global environmental issues related to the management of food waste to eradicate famine, artificial intelligence and sustainability, health and environmental care and climate change were highlighted.

Challenges:

The number of women, girls and children in need of care, protection and services is increasing. It is therefore necessary to develop the current social security system, legislation and policies in line with the development transformations taking place in the UAE.

A- Education and training of women

Since its establishment in 1971, the UAE has been working on building women's capacities and empowering and enhancing their potential without any discrimination. Under the Constitution, solidarity and equality between men and women is a fundamental right. The late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan established these fundamental rights for women as an integral part of society since the UAE's founding.

The UAE has made great progress in the field of women's education and training, and the education sector has improved significantly. The number of public schools in the country reached 639 during the academic year 2017/2018. The number of private schools reached 580, The public schools accounted for 54%, while the total number of classes in public schools was 11,914 during the academic year 2017/2018. The number of male and female students enrolled in various educational stages in the country reached 1.081.020 students, while the number of male and female students in the government sector reached 287.725 which is 26.6% of the total number of students. The number of students in private schools reached 793,295 which is 73.4% of the total number of students during the academic year 2017/2018 (Table 1). The number of employees in the public and private sector schools amounted to about 70.016, of which 23.146 worked in the public sector (33% of the total). Female employees in the teaching staff amounted to 16.682 (about 72% in the public sector), while the number of employees in the private sector schools was 46.870 (67%). The share of females working in teaching was about 37.468 individuals (about 80% of the total number of employees in the private sector).

The literacy rate among women in the country is 95.8% (UNESCO report 2015), and 95% of secondary school graduates continue their education at higher educational establishments, compared to 80% of males. Girls also make up about two-thirds of students in government universities and more than half of them in private higher education institutions. Statistics show that 56% of graduates of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs in public universities are women, and 60% of UAE graduate students at the Masdar Institute for Science and Technology in Abu Dhabi are female.

The UAE has introduced specialized educational services for persons with disability in the country, in order to empower them (both male and female) in public schools. The UAE has established rehabilitation centers for the purpose of training and integrating them to be active members of society.

The number of female students in higher education institutions reached 35,602 in the academic year 2016/2017 compared to 16,436 male students in the same year. By comparing the total number of students in establishments of higher education by gender (male / female) in the academic year 2016/2017, the percentage of males reached 31.6% of the total number of students in establishments of higher education while the percentage of females in these establishments was 68 (4% of the total number of students -Table 2). This is evidence of the UAE's ability to encourage women to pursue higher education and achieve the highest percentage of university enrollment compared to male citizens.

The UAE offers scholarships abroad (university education and above) for both males and females. The data show that the number of female students studying abroad was 378, compared to 636 in the academic year 2016/2017.

Challenges:

Despite the growing number of females in schools and universities, it is noted that the general trend of the academic choices of women for girls tends towards literary specialization, although the general trend of the composition of the labor market tends to scientific functions.

B- Women and health

Data indicates that the high level of health services during the years 2014-2017, with the number of hospitals increased from 116 to 143 public and private hospitals. The number of clinics and centers increased from 3.947 to 4.968 for the public and private sectors. The number of maternal and childcare centers and units increased from 64 centers and units in 2006 to 69 centers and health units in 2016.

The number of doctors, including dentists and nurses, rose from 56.923 to 82.711 for the same year. The UAE maternal mortality index due to pregnancy, childbirth is known globally due to its 2.05 per 100.000 live births, and the increase in the proportion of births conducted under the supervision of health personnel to 99.9% in 2016. The UAE has established several health centers for the early detection of breast cancer nationwide, in addition to several centers and a state health unit of maternal and child care nationwide, resulting in an average rise of the life expectancy of females in the UAE from 55 in 1960 to 78.9 in 2017, according to the Human Development Report 2018. Under-five mortality rate per 1000 live births decreased from 13.3 in 1995 to 7.76 in 2016.

Challenges:

There is a wide range of women who face many diseases and cannot identify their health problems in addition to the spread of diseases of obesity, arteries, heart failure, cancer, etc. This varies from an Emirate to another and from cities to remote areas, so it is necessary to conduct a study on the status of women health at the State level. Some remote areas also need specialized and therapeutic hospitals, which require the Ministry of Health and health authorities to work to find quick solutions to the increasing cases of health problems and treatment services.

C- Violence against women

The Government of the UAE is committed to ensuring gender equality and non-discrimination on the basis of gender, in addition to incorporating the principle of equality between men and women in its Constitution as well as in its national laws, and compliance with international standards.

The UAE has taken a few measures to address violence against women:

1. Legislation and laws:

- The UAE's Constitution 1971.

- Federal Law No. 17 of 1972 on Nationality and Passports.
- Federal Law No. 8 of 1980 on Labour Relations Regulatory.
- Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 on the Penal Code.
- Federal Law No. 28 of 2005 on Personal Status.
- Federal Law No. 51 of 2006 on Combating Human Trafficking.
- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on the Child Rights Act "Wadima".

2. International Conventions and Charters ratified by the UAE:

- Beijing Platform for Action - Fourth World Summit on Women, 1995.
- The Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1997.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1997.
- ILO Convention on the Wage Gap 1997.
- ILO Convention on Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, 2001.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 2004.

The UAE is constantly developing its federal and local institutions, civil society and private institutions and raising the capacity of its employees to provide support and especially to women, enhance their role and enable them at all levels permanently, and empower women to access services, access to information, And participation in public life.

The UAE has also taken the necessary measures to promote equal opportunities for women and men to participate in public life and political life. by ensuring the right to vote, the right to participate in the formulation of government policy and its implementation, the right to hold public office and the right to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with public and political life.

The Government of the UAE has been able to enshrine the principle of prohibiting discrimination on grounds of gender within the Constitution and within national laws relating to education, employment and political, social, cultural and economic life. The UAE's Civil Procedure Code of 1992 states that no distinction shall be made between men and women with regard to litigation or enforcement proceedings. The UAE established the Gender Balance Council in 2015 to undertake the following tasks:

- 1- Reduce the gender gap in employment.
- 2- Strengthening the UAE's position in global competitiveness reports.
- 3- Review and propose to update legislation, policies and programs to achieve gender balance in employment.
- 4- Enacting international laws, regulations, resolutions and conventions related to the gender balance in the field of work.
- 5- Achieving non-discrimination against women.
- 6- Review and follow-up of Global Competitiveness Reports and International Reports.
- 7- Work on recommendations to narrow the gender gap in the workplace.
- 8- Proposing indicators of gender balance and submitting them to the Council of the Ministry for adoption and seeking to strengthen their implementation in coordination with the local authorities in the State, to achieve gender balance in society and to promote the position of UAE globally.

The Government of the UAE has launched the "National Strategy for Women's Empowerment and Entrepreneurship 2015-2021", Its strategic objectives include:

- 1- Establishing a legislative and institutional framework supportive of women, in line with best practices in the area of women's empowerment and in line with the UAE's obligations under international charters and treaties.
- 2- Raising the level of women's participation in various fields and their representation in positions of power and decision-making, thus enhancing the image of Emirati women at all levels.
- 3- Strengthening the capacity of federal, local and private government institutions to adopt gender-sensitive policies, legislation and budgets.
- 4- Enhancing the ability of women to meet the challenges and social phenomena emerging in the UAE society.
- 5- Providing health services and care for women that enhance their physical and psychological health, to ensure safe health care for women.
- 6- Providing protection, prevention and supportive environment for women of special interest.

The Government of the UAE has launched the National Strategy for Motherhood and Childhood 2017-2021, which includes the following strategic objectives:

- 1- Promote the right of children and mothers to comprehensive care within a sustainable health environment.
- 2- Strengthen child protection within an integrated and comprehensive system.
- 3- Promote the right of children and adolescents to quality learning opportunities that develop their personalities and mental and physical abilities.
- 4- Supporting the active participation of children and adolescents in all fields.
- 5- Planning policies and programs so that they are based on evidence and accurate information that guarantee the rights of the child.

The UAE promulgated Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 on the Child Rights Act "Wadima". The Council of Ministers also issued Decree No. 52 of 2018 on the executive regulations of Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on the Rights of the Child «Wadima». The executive regulations included conditions for the employment of children, procedures for reporting violations of children's rights in educational institutions and the terms of reference of the Child Protection Unit, preventive measures, protective measures, foster family conditions and obligations, and controls for the placement of a child in an adoptive family or other party.

The Ministry of Community Development has been designated by the cabinet of ministers in its session held on 4 December 2018, to set up a policy on domestic violence in the UAE in cooperation with concerned partners in this field. The Ministry has set up a national policy committee to review and assess the legislative reality and regional and international trends. Analysis of the current situation and challenges and review of international experiences.

Challenges:

Violence against women is existent in all societies, However the UAE is currently working on addressing cases of violence against women and ways to prevent them. However, there is no law to counter domestic violence. The UAE is currently studying this phenomenon and proposing appropriate solutions, including legislation that criminalizes cases of domestic violence.

D- Women and armed conflict

The UAE plays an active role in humanitarian relief and development work, and it is working on coordinate joint positions and programs to alleviate the suffering of countries suffering from natural disasters, conflicts and wars, especially for women; who suffer the most from disasters and crises, in addition to emphasizing the role of women in the international relief effort.

The UAE has been promoting the role of women in the field of security and peace. In this context, Abu Dhabi hosted the "Women, Peace and Security Summit: The Dimensions of Gender Balance in the Field of International Peace and Security", organized by the Women's Union General and the Trends Center for Research and Consultancy in Abu Dhabi, in cooperation with Women in International Security and UN Women, under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, President of the General Women's Union, with the participation of a number of political and academic leaders from the UAE, Arab and international countries. The Summit aims at strengthening the role of women in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The UAE's Red Crescent, in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), is implementing relief programs for refugee women and children in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and Libya. It also pledged \$ 68 million to support Syrian refugees at the Brussels donors' conference in April 2017, in addition to the UAE government's decision to receive 15,000 Syrian refugees over a period of five years, as well as more than 250,000 Syrian citizens residing on its soil. The UAE has granted citizens of countries suffering from wars and disasters the residence for a year, especially since these people are often in need of solidarity and are under severe pressure as a result of forced displacement. This allows them to change their legal status in the country and give them the opportunity to rebuild their lives and earn a living.

On the sidelines of the 73rd session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the UAE Ministry of Defense, the General Women's Union and the UN-Women, to build and develop the capabilities of Arab women in the field of military action and peacekeeping. The training program for Arab women on military action and peacekeeping will contribute to the preparation of female officers for the United Nations peacekeeping operations, increase the number of women qualified to serve as officers in the army and establish networks of women interested in military action and peacekeeping.

The programme will also contribute to advancing the strategic objectives of Security Council resolution 1325 and focusing on the importance of capacity-building and training.

Khawla Bint Al Azur Military School - a military school in the UAE specialized in the training of women in military action – organized the military training course for Arab women who participated in the training program in February 2019. Based on the partnership between the UAE and the UN-Women in the field of military and peacekeeping operations, more than 100 civil women from seven Arab countries and the UAE attended the course for three months, followed by a two-week training course on peacekeeping.

As part of the UAE's efforts to promote women, peace and security agenda in the next implementation phase beyond 2020, the UAE will launch a series of panel discussions in collaboration with the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security to examine the important role of women in the social, political and economic aspects of post-conflict reconstruction, and to raise the level of research, improvement of information and practices that rely on data, as one of the areas that have not been adequately studied in the agenda of women and peace and security.

Challenges:

The UAE is working in coordination with international organizations and civil societies in areas of armed conflict, for the implementation of United Nations resolutions on international peace and security. This is a challenge in logistics, but through accumulated experience, the UAE has been able to provide the necessary services to the refugees and the affected people.

E- Women and the economy

The Emirates Gender Balance Council is the "**Gender Balance Guide**" and is a pivotal reference for public and private sector institutions to reduce the gender gap, supporting the vision of the UAE 2021 and the goals of sustainable development 2030. The Guide is a reference and a comprehensive tool that helps government and private institutions to support balance in place By clarifying the benchmarks and the concrete steps to be taken to implement the requirements of this balance, set in accordance with the highest international standards, and with the UAE national laws and the National Balance Index initiative. The guide complies with

the objectives of "Vision 2021", which seeks to raise the level of women's participation in society, especially in the economic. Its implementation will contribute to the achievement of the UAE's commitment to the United Nations' 2030 sustainable development goals, which will give it a more advanced position in global competitiveness indicators linked to gender balance. It will also support the national indicators associated with the UAE Vision 2021, such as the Social Cohesion Index and Happiness Index, of national indicators on gender balance, where institutions can develop initiatives that will achieve better performance indicators in this area.

Emirati women contribute positively to the economy through their active role in various sectors as workers and investors. Due to the strong support given by the leadership, women have been able to increase their contribution to the economic activity and the labor market, and expand the scope of the Emirates Businesswomen Council steadily to reach more than 23,000 women in the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and by about 15% of the members of the chambers of commerce and industry in the country, working in both local and global markets. Women run about 24 thousand successful commercial projects, and about 30% of small and medium enterprises, with investments worth between 45 and 50 billion dirhams. The percentage of women working in the banking sector reached 37.5% of the total number of employees. The representation of women was 13.8% in the boards of the federal authorities in the UAE, and the representation on the boards of public shareholding companies listed on the Dubai Financial Market increased to 4% in 2017.

According to the legatum Index report, based in London, the UAE ranked first in the world in the 2017 Gender Equity Index. Women's participation represents about 46.6% of the labor market in the public and private sectors, and their participation exceeds 66% of the total workforce in the government sector, where they hold 30% of leadership positions, and 15 % of specialized and academic jobs.

A network of female members of the boards of directors was launched in the UAE. It includes leading women and current members of the boards of directors, to unite the efforts of women leaders in the public and private sectors under one roof, and to ensure easy access to potential female members of the boards. The network also raises awareness of decision makers in companies, as well as the importance of participating in the boards of directors, and thus achieving the desired goal, which is to raise the ratio to 20% by 2020.

The UAE has launched the "1000 female Leaders" initiative, which aims at providing women with tools, training and empowerment opportunities to enhance their skills and abilities to become leaders of the current generation and future generations, within the sectors of their choice, and to eliminate common concepts and stereotypes about gender roles and capacities, making that a part of the past.

Challenges:

The UAE is working to provide equal opportunities for men and women in the labor market and business administration, however, women are still reluctant to take advantage of the opportunities available by the UAE.

F- Women in positions of power and decision-making

In April 2019, the UAE government launched the Ministry of Possibilities, which represents the next generation of government practices. Its tasks include developing proactive and root-based solutions for specific topics within a specified period. It includes task forces with joint tasks from various federal and local government agencies, the private sector, and individuals, and their configurations are changed according to the files on the agenda.

The new ministry is a virtual one, without a minister. Its staff consists of cabinet members in the UAE, where four ministers, two males and two females, were appointed. This ministry is entrusted with several national files and includes in its first phase:

- Proactive Service Management: Aims to provide pre-demand services in the various fields of government work and all categories of clients.
- Management of Rewards based on good behavior: Aims to stimulate good and positive behavior in the community through a reward system that is given to those who are committed to positive social behavior in the form of points that benefit individuals in paying the fees of various government services.
- Skills Discovery Management: Aims to create an enabling environment for citizens in order to enhance & develop their skills, and employ them in support of the development process and creating a bright

future. It also includes developing a mechanism to explore local skills of different persons in various age groups and categories.

- Management of the Government Procurement Platform: Aims to develop the system of government procurement processes and guide them to support small and medium-sized national entrepreneurs, taking advantage of the e-commerce innovations.

Women in the UAE occupy several leadership and supervisory positions in various fields and sectors. Women account for 64% of leadership and supervisory positions, 72% of health jobs, 69% of education, 46% of administrative jobs, 30% of technical and specialized jobs, 51% % of appointments in ministries and government agencies. Their high-level presence represents a qualitative leap in gender balance and highlights the importance of women's role in discussing their own issues and public affairs.

What distinguishes Emirati women is to ability to take advantage of an enabling environment that gives women equal opportunities with men in positions of power and decision-making, as they were able to demonstrate their strong will to be in places that were once exclusive possessions of men. The Ministerial formation in October 2017 included 33 ministers, among them 9 women, representing 27% of all ministers.

Thus, the participation of women in the cabinet is one of the highest in the world, reflecting the UAE's stance on granting equal opportunities for both sexes in decision-making positions. The number of female candidates in the third electoral cycle of the 2015 Federal National Council (FNC) was 78 candidates, or 23.6% of the total male and female candidates. There are currently 8 female members of the FNC, representing about 20% of the 40 seats and the FNC's current President is a woman.

The UAE is aiming to achieve an equal ratio between male and female members of the Council in the fourth election cycle in 2019. His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, decided to increase the representation of Emirati women in the seats of the Federal National Council to 50%. This decision aims to empower women and increase their contributions to the country and their participation in decision-making, as well as improving the status of women in the closing the gender gap index in government. The percentage of women working in the UAE diplomatic service today is more than 30% and is constantly rising. This percentage confirms the UAE is pioneering in empowering women and involving them in everything

that serves the nation. The number of women working in the diplomatic and consular corps reached 234 in 2017.

The number of Emirati female engineers in the military industry has reached 50%, according to national companies specialized in the fields of aviation, military defense and manufacturing; these companies reveal that the percentage of female citizens employed by them has reached 50%, where women showed a high level of creativity, innovation and achievement. The demand of Emirati women to work in national military industries is expected to increase.

Challenges:

Women have had great success in high-level positions and participation in decision-making. It remains crucial to the extent of which women can continue to benefit from the opportunities offered by the UAE.

G- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

1- UAE Gender Balance Council

In February 2015, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, announced the establishment of the Emirates Gender Balance Council. It is a national mechanism aimed at reducing the gender gap in all sectors of the UAE in order to achieve equality in opportunities between men and women, in order to participate in the process of sustainable development, achieve the UAE's vision, and to advocate for the Gender Balance portfolio locally, regionally and internationally.

Objectives:

- Close the gender gap in all sectors of the state.
- Enhance the country's status in the global competitiveness reports regarding the gender gap.
- Strive to achieve gender balance in decision-making positions.

- Classify the UAE globally as a model for gender balance.
- Make the UAE a reference for legislation in gender balance.

Specialties:

- Review the current legislation, policies and programs, and propose new legislation, programs and update them to achieve gender balance.
- Recommend activating laws, regulations, decisions and international conventions related to gender balance in the field of labor, to avoid discrimination against women.
- Review the global competitiveness reports and international reports, and work on programs, plans and policies relating to the reduction of the gender gap in the workplace.
- Propose indicators of gender balance and submit them to the cabinet for adoption, and seek to strengthen their application in the State, in coordination with local authorities.
- Coordinate with federal and local authorities to achieve the objectives of the Council.
- Coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to represent the UAE in international forums and propose the signing of cooperation agreements and joint programs.
- Create a database related to gender balance in the workplace.
- Submit periodic reports to the cabinet on the progress, initiatives, projects, and needs required by the Council to achieve its objectives.
- Any other relevant functions of the Council 's objectives, assigned by the cabinet.

2- NAMA Women Advancement Establishment:

NAMA Women Advancement Establishment was established in December 2015 by a royal decree issued by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah. NAMA focuses on activating the role of women and their empowerment in the economic, professional,

social and other sectors, women are an indispensable resource in the development and progress of the UAE. NAMA seeks to move from the stage of empowering women and ensuring gender equality, to the stage of advancement & providing them a role as an active member of society, as well as enabling women to reach the highest levels. NAMA also promotes policies supporting women, as well as launching effective programs that support gender mainstreaming in all sectors. Three development institutions fall under NAMA umbrella: The Sharjah Businesswomen Council, Irthi Contemporary Crafts Council, and the Badri Academy for Knowledge and Capacity Building.

3- ADNOC Gender Balance Committee:

ADNOC, a government oil company in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, has established a Gender Balance Committee. ADNOC has made significant progress in its career to empower women. The percentage of women working in ADNOC accounted for 12% of the total workforce, divided into different leadership positions and administrative and technical positions in ADNOC's respective subsidiary companies and workplaces, and 13% of senior positions in ADNOC. It intends to reach 15% of women's participation in senior management positions by 2020. The company has a total of 5231 female employees. ADNOC's efforts and commitment to empowering women and promoting gender diversity in the oil and gas sector, are in line with its Smart Growth 2030 strategy, which is based on an institutional culture focused on outstanding performance.

ADNOC has also identified a range of initiatives to promote women's participation in the oil and gas sector. In 2016, ADNOC announced the appointment of at least one female Chief Executive Officer in its group of companies by 2020. In April 2018, the first two female CEOs were appointed based on achievement, actual performance, merit and maturity.

4- The Dubai Customs Ladies Committee:

The committee includes a distinguished group of experienced female civil servants who work to enhance the role of Dubai female customs employees and provide them with the necessary support through the development of their skills. This will contribute to Dubai Customs as a supportive circle for the role of women in line with the interest of the Government of the UAE, and the importance of enhancing their role in society.

The Dubai Customs Ladies Committee aims to empower women culturally and socially, and to develop their social personality and cultural role to enable them to fully perform their duties, and to promote Dubai Customs in various fields, such as professional development, education, health, sport, economy and trade, and to establish a forum in which female employees can exchange views on the most important issues that help to create solutions and continuous improvement of work, and strengthen friendship and understanding among them in the circle and beyond. The committee also works to educate women about the means to preserve and care for their families, while developing their skills and improving their performance, without affecting either side. As a key objective, the committee is keen to contribute to improving the working environment of the Department's female employees, transforming it into an environment that encourages creativity and innovation, and attracts female talent.

5- ENOC Women Committee

ENOC is an energy company in the Emirate of Dubai, which focuses on the adoption of gender equality in leadership roles. This is shown by the continuous increase in the number of Emirati women in ENOC staff, that showcases ENOC's continuing commitment to providing women with fair opportunities and training and specialized educational programs, to enable them to achieve the successes they aspire professionally and personally.

In 2017, ENOC Group launched the first edition of the 'Women in Energy Award' to honor the achievements of creative women in the energy sector in the UAE. The award recognizes outstanding women who are representations for the energy sector, and who demonstrate exceptional leadership and ability to drive change through their contributions to the sector.

Challenges:

There are many federal and local mechanisms and civil institutions that work with women's issues, and they have the unlimited support of the government. However, the main challenge facing them is the extent of women benefiting from the services provided by these mechanisms.

H- Women's human rights

According to the 2016 World Economic Forum's report on closing the gender gap, the UAE has the following rankings:

- Ranked eighth in the sub-index on equal pay for similar work.
- Ranked first in the literacy sub-index.
- Ranked first in the sub-index for secondary education.
- Ranked first in the sub-index of the sex ratio at birth (female to male).

In May 2015, the cabinet adopted a decree to form the Emirates Gender Balance Council in all fields of work, which contributes to supporting the UAE's position locally and internationally. The Council aims to narrow the gender gap and balance the decision-making positions of the UAE to be among the top 25 countries in the gender balance index by 2021. The Council offers innovative initiatives and projects that contribute to achieving a balance between men and women and makes the UAE a model for this aspect.

In 2018, the cabinet approved the draft of the first legislation to provide equal pay and salary between men and women. The adoption of the draft law comes within the framework of strengthening national policies and legislation to ensure the protection of women's rights and supporting their role in the national development process, which is in line with the National Strategy for Women's Empowerment for the years 2015-2021, which was launched by Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, President of the General Women's Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and the Supreme President of the Family Development Foundation.

According to the UAE's Labor Law, Article 32 stipulates that women shall be paid the same wage as men if they do the same work. In September 2017, the Emirates Gender Balance Council launched the Gender Balance Manual - practical steps for institutions in the UAE, which is the result of efforts by several government agencies, in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The guide is the first of its kind in the world, and is a comprehensive tool that shows the measures and steps that ought to be

taken by the public and private sectors to implement the requirements of this balance, and to reduce the gender gap through five axes:

1. Commitment to, and monitoring of, gender balance.
2. Mainstreaming gender policies and programs and developing gender response budgets.
3. Enhancing the participation of gender-sensitive personnel.
4. Achieving gender balance in leadership positions.
5. Gender-sensitive communication.

Abu Dhabi Police statistics revealed that 14% of its cadres are female, confirming the role of Emirati women in all areas, including police, which was developed with the support of the wise leadership.

The General Women's Union, the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and the Emirates Gender Balance Council participated in the 29th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva in January 2018, as part of the delegation, which was headed by His Excellency Dr. Anwar Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and representatives of several federal agencies. The General Women's Union held a panel discussion on the sidelines of the meeting on "the UAE efforts in women empowerment and gender equality", highlighting the rights of Emirati women supported by the leadership since the establishment of the State, which granted women the same rights enshrined in the Constitution for men. The participants also reviewed some of the achievements and successes of Emirati women, and the efforts of national mechanisms to enhance the competitiveness of the UAE globally.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2017, the UAE ranked first in literacy among women, and second in terms of gender pay equality. Women in the UAE manage half of the small and medium businesses in the sector, as well as the election and appointment of nine women members out of a total of 40 members of the Federal National Council.

His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, issued Federal Decree No. 27 of 2019 appointing Judge Khadija Khamis Khalifa Al-Malas and Judge Salama Rashid Salem Al-Kutbi in the

Federal Judiciary. The decree stipulated the appointment of Khadija Khamis Khalifa Al-Malas as Judge of Appeal and Salama Rashid Salem Al-Kutbi in the post of primary judge in federal courts.

The UAE has adopted many provisions to provide social and material wellbeing and welfare for women. Under UAE law, an Islamic marriage contract requires a husband to provide a dowry, and to cover his wife's expenses. Women may also have access to justice and receive fair treatment under the law in the case of a spouse's shortcoming or abuse. This is in addition to legislation, regulations and institutions that protect women from violence and other manifestations of injustice that may occur.

NAMA and the UN Women have launched the UN Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative, which states the commitment of basic principles of women's empowerment in the workplace, such as their right to jobs, promotions, and gender equality, among other rights.

The UAE has also adopted several national policies and strategies aimed at empowering Emirati women and enhancing their position in all sectors. These policies include the launching of the "National Strategy for the Empowerment and Entrepreneurship of Women in the UAE 2015-2021", which aims at empowering and building the capacities of UAE women and overcoming difficulties in their participation in all fields, expand their development participation and enhance the status of Emirati women in regional and international forums.

As part of its commitment to International human rights conventions to which it is a party, and as part of its efforts to meet the periodic reports requested by the treaty bodies and their efforts in following up the implementation of the recommendations issued by these committees, the UAE has reviewed its second report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) before the competent committee in November 2015.

As part of the UAE's voluntary pledges, relevant to the UAE's election to the Human Rights Council for the period 2016-2018, the UAE has supported UN Women by funding the opening of a liaison office for the GCC in Abu Dhabi. The office was officially opened in October 2016, and the General Women's Union provided the facilities and funding required.

Challenges:

The UAE is working hard to enact legislation, create national and civil mechanisms to defend the human rights of women and to enable women to benefit from such legislation and platforms. The UAE also cooperates with the Human Rights Council to implement its recommendations without compromising humanitarian obligations in general and women's rights in particular.

I- Women and the media

The Emirates Gender Balance Council supervised a specialized workshop held during the World Government Summit in Dubai from 12 to 14 February 2017. The workshop discussed ways to accelerate the implementation of the fifth goal of the UN Sustainable Development Goals focused on "Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls". The fifth goal team also launched an innovative multi-platform "GAME-IN", which was ranked third by the audience based on the feasibility of the idea and its applicability. The workshop was organized in cooperation with the United Nations, the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, with the participation of scientists, experts, and government officials to discuss the main challenges facing these goals and to develop possible solutions.

The workshop resulted in the launch of a campaign to encourage schools, governments, companies and NGOs to engage in partnerships with women's entities in the UAE and enable them to launch multi-platform IT campaigns on gender equality through SMS, video, radio, Internet games, applications, with a view of changing stereotypes about gender equality. One of the outcomes of the workshop is the announcement of the design of a multi-category global award to encourage communication and IT-based campaigns that deliver tangible results on gender balance, and have been divided into specific categories to reward schools, governments, corporations and non-governmental organizations.

Most government agencies, whether local or federal, have social media channels dedicated to Emirati women, notably the Media Observatory in the UAE Women's Encyclopedia, supervised by the General Women's Union, to highlight the Emirati women achievements, opinion, and digital initiatives (leaders at your service) to use digital media in response to public inquiries, modern communication technology, Emirati women, awareness leaflets for women and family, and the Arab Social Networking Pioneer Award.

The General Women's Union launched "WLK RAI" (your opinion matters), a consultative platform that follows the national project (UAE Women's Encyclopedia), a service available electronically and through social networks. The UAE is working as a governmental accelerator to implement the National Strategy for Empowerment and Leadership of Women by seeking the real needs of women and enhancing transparency in the provision of services to women in order to find the best innovative and developmental solutions by opening channels of communication between officials and decision makers to put a package of legislations and policies specifically for women.

The General Women's Union has established a media observatory to monitor the achievements of Emirati women (EUAEW), a platform across social networks to see the achievements of Emirati women, including:

- Female role model figures.
- Statements and quotes.
- Awards.
- Press Interviews.
- Statistics.
- Publications and reports.

Dubai Health Authority launched a "Leaders at Your Service" initiative to enhance the communication between the Authority leaders and officials and its customers, providing an opportunity to monitor any queries, questions or complaints, as well as suggestions and constructive ideas. It broadcasts weekly through various means of communication, including social networks.

A number of official agencies in the UAE have held a series of workshops and lectures for parents to promote the culture of good and secure use of networks and social networking, and to raise awareness of the risk of unsafe dealing with the Internet. In addition, to training on the correct use of social communication to ensure that information or data is not misused in any way in the future, including:

- Parents in the era of social communication.
- Awareness of social engineering and applications of social media.
- Digital tolerance for risk protection.
- Do not let them fool you.
- Use of technology to combat extremist groups.

Abu Dhabi Media Company launched an Emirati program on the Abu Dhabi TV channel for UAE and Arab audiences. The program looks for excellence among the “daughters of the nation” wherever they are and highlights their lives and achievements. Additionally, it visits them abroad and leaves each of them to lead the course of her own episode, to express herself on her own, to walk with the camera to her place of work or stay, to speak directly to the audience without a broadcaster or program provider, away from the stereotypical question and answer style.

The National Media Council hosted a workshop entitled "Protecting the Rights of Women and Children" on 14/7/2016 at its headquarters in Dubai, which was organized by the Department of Protection of Children and Women in the General Department of Human Rights in Dubai Police. It was on the media role in highlighting and enhancing the capabilities of UAE women, and developing media programs aimed at sensitizing the community to the rights of children and women alike. The workshop participants discussed the experiences of the media in the issues of child protection, combating violence against them, and their development issues, as well as discussing the professional principles for addressing the issues of children's and women's rights.

Al Dhafra channel launched a program called "Bornamaji-Tech" (My tech program) to present the latest of young Emirati inventions and innovations as they use elements and vocabulary of modern technology. The program focuses on demonstrating the capabilities of each young Emirati man and woman in technology. The program delves into a field trip within the UAE universities, specifically within the IT departments, to provide direct encounters with inventives and creative students, with professors and supervisors supervising these

students. Many views were presented, differentiated by age towards endemic technology at every moment of their lives.

Challenges:

The UAE has an open and unrestricted media space, which allows women to freely use technology and the Internet, without restrictions. This is evidenced by the great employment of social media in its various forms. This enables women to make better use of the potential of the media.

J- Women and the environment

Women's participation in the Ministry of Climate Change and the Environment has reached more than 55%, occupying different levels and technical and administrative specialties. A 2016 report by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) revealed that Emirati women have a higher participation rate in renewable energy sector, which amounted to 35% of the workforce in this area.

On January 17, 2019, Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (Masdar) hosted the 4th Sustainability, Environment and Renewable Energy Forum for Women during the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, with the participation of key speakers to motivate women and girls to play an active role in addressing the challenges of global sustainability. The Masdar-led forum promotes new ideas, practical solutions and collaboration to empower current and future generations of women to become leaders in sustainability. Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (Masdar) has launched a Leadership Program under the umbrella of the Women's Forum for Sustainability, Environment and Renewable Energy, a year-long initiative that aims to develop the skills of women aged 20 to 30 and qualify them to become sustainability leaders, through active communication with policy makers, industry leaders, technology experts, entrepreneurs and prominent community figures. The program will include several specialized educational workshops and global events to enhance communication and knowledge sharing, and other opportunities for high quality vocational training.

NAMA has signed a one-year strategic partnership agreement with the Women's Forum for Sustainability, Environment and Renewable Energy to inspire women and girls to play a more active role in

addressing the challenges of global sustainability. Under the partnership, the two parties have agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the design and development of several programs that contribute to supporting women and girls of all nationalities to lead change, motivate them to innovate, enhance their common aspirations and support their efforts to empower current and future generations of women leaders in sustainability, and to play more effective roles for the achievement of sustainable development based on agenda 2030. The partnership aims to promote women's participation in new and emerging sectors of energy, environment, and technology.

Individuals and companies in Dubai can now generate solar power to reduce electricity bills by installing solar panels on their buildings. The solar energy project is part of “Shams Dubai” (Sun of Dubai), a project run by the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority. The client produces and consumes his own electricity. If more electricity is produced, the surplus will automatically be returned to the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority network, while the invoice issued to the consumer account will be cleared and settled based on the clearing. In both ways, renewable green energy is used to reduce electricity bills in Dubai.

The Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) hosted the Women's Conference on Nuclear Energy, a global conference held annually, and hosted by the UAE for its twenty-fourth session in Abu Dhabi in November 2016, under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, President of the General Women's Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and the Supreme President of the Family Development Foundation. The conference was held for the first time in the Middle East and brought together a large number of expert members of the Organization from around the world, which reached 25,000 members from 100 different countries, in addition to a delegation from the UAE.

The research is concerned with the application to recycle or dispose of e-waste, food waste, wood waste, auto parts and tire waste, or an application to open the online market for local agricultural and animal products to support local farmers, support sustainable production by Emirati women, or to answer veterinary queries and to reduce food waste.

In hosting Dubai Expo 2020, the UAE is also seeking to create new partnerships to create sustainable energy and water resources to facilitate people's access, and to plan scarce resources by maintaining and effectively managing existing and new resources.

On the 22nd and 23rd of April, 2019, at the Dubai Knowledge Park, the Emirates Environmental Education Group organized the 19th edition of the Environmental Public Speaking Competition for schools, with the participation of 68 teams, 450 students and teaching staff from schools throughout the country, as part of its April 22 Earth Day celebrations. Each year the competition highlights global environmental issues related to managing food waste to eradicate famine, artificial intelligence and sustainability, health care, the environment and climate change.

A group of business leaders, government officials and academics from around the world gathered in Abu Dhabi during the third annual "Women's Forum for Sustainability, Environment and Renewable Energy", which was held under the theme "Women and the East," focusing on the impact of this trend on enhancing the role of women in Sustainability and Renewable Energy. The event was organized by Masdar in partnership with the Zayed Future Energy Prize.

Based on its oil revenues, the UAE government plans to reach this goal by 2050 and seeks to strike a balance between economic needs and environmental goals. The UAE has great potential in solar energy and is keen to reduce its use of hydrocarbons. The UAE plans to produce 44% of its electricity needs from renewable energies, 38% gas, 12% clean fuel, and 6% nuclear power.

Ras Al Khaimah's Environmental Protection and Development Authority launched the first edition of the "Soft Control for Sustainable Environment" award, which has been listed in the Gold category at the British Ideas Foundation for 2018 as an unprecedented global initiative in environmental work. The vision of the award revolves around empowering women for a sustainable environment by devising environmentally friendly practices that encourage women to make voluntary efforts to protect the environment and sustain their resources, and to honor outstanding women's environmental efforts.

Challenges:

The UAE is working on the employment of alternative energy and providing a pollution-free environment. The UAE relies heavily on women to employ natural resources in the best possible way to ensure their sustainability. This requires constant awareness, training and capacity-building. Women need to strive to make the UAE free of greenhouse emissions and able to participate in sustaining resources.

K- The Girl Child

The Cabinet adopted the National Strategy for Motherhood and Childhood, and the Strategic Plan to Promote of the Rights of Children with Disabilities 2017-2021, with a view to unifying and coordinating the various efforts to protect and care for children with disabilities, and to provide all the means and capabilities to preserve their rights, in addition to enabling them to become an active member in society. The implementation of the two strategies is supervised by several specialized entities, in coordination with the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood.

The first draft of the strategy was prepared based on the information and recommendations comprised in the analysis of the status of children in the UAE, which included the views of several groups of children and adolescents regarding health, education, protection, participation, and all related issues. In addition, 45 local and federal entities participated in the consultations, among them are Ministry of Health and Prevention, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Community Development, Ministry of Culture and knowledge Development, Ministry of Education, the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority, the Health Authorities in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. International organizations were also involved in the coordination and the review, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization "UNESCO", World Health Organization "WHO", the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Save the Children Fund, as well as a number of experts from the World Bank, and other international technical experts on early childhood development and child protection.

The Supreme Council for Motherhood & Childhood is preparing a national strategy entitled "UAE mother, child and youth friendly", in cooperation with its strategic partners. The Supreme Council was summoned to prepare this strategy by Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, President of the General Women's Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and the Supreme President of the Family Development Foundation, in accordance with a decision adopted by the Council of Ministers to celebrate the Emirati Children's Day. The preparation of the strategy is a continuation of the ongoing efforts of the leadership to encourage the participation of mothers, children, adolescents, and children with disabilities in building society, and empowering them in cultural and health sectors, and various aspects of care and protection, environment, infrastructure and services.

The strategy is based on international standards adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The strategy works to include the rights of mothers, children and adolescents as a key component of their development goals, policies, initiatives and projects, and to support the access to maternal health care, provide them with suitable environment in public places and workplaces that are mother-child friendly, and to improve the levels of health care and safety for children, which provide them with the opportunities to growth.

The Ministerial Development Council, chaired by His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs, approved the celebration of Emirati Children's Day on 15 March of each year, which coincided with the adoption of Wadima Law on 15 March 2016. This law came to emphasize the UAE's vision and readiness to nurture the future generations, and to overcome all the difficulties that prevent their proper development, in order to qualify them to be good and effective members of society, in accordance with the vision of the UAE 2021 and its centennial in 2071.

The Emirati Children's Day comes at the initiative of Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, President of the General Women's Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and the Supreme President of the Family Development Foundation, within the framework of the National Strategy for Motherhood and Childhood 2017-2020, with the aim of raising awareness among the UAE community and all residents about the importance of the child rights in the family and community, by stimulating government institutions, private institutions, civil society institutions, and individuals to enhance their role in achieving development and implementation of national plans and programs .

On September 25, 2018, the Ministry of Education organized the First Conference on Early Childhood Development in the UAE entitled "Redesigning Early Childhood Care and Education Services" in cooperation with the UAE Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, World Education Office- UNESCO, and UNICEF. The conference is a milestone achievement for the Ministry of Education, providing an exceptional platform for decision makers, leaders in education, and teachers in the UAE, to learn about the latest global research on early childhood care and education, and to adopt the best practices of modern child care to ensure their development properly and scientifically.

Sharjah hosted the headquarters of the Parliament of the Arab Child, in a continuation of efforts to emphasize the importance of Arab children, as a part of the UAE's commitment towards its brotherly Arab

nations. This represents a qualitative shift in the attention towards children, and a platform for children development and to express their views. Today's children are tomorrow's decision makers.

The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood has prepared a plan for the cooperation program with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the development of early childhood, entitled "The first thousand days".

Challenges:

Children's issues are of vital importance to the UAE. It has enacted legislation, issued policies, and created mechanisms to improve children's rights and enable them to build their capacity and future participation in nation-building. The UAE relies heavily on the experiences gained during childhood, which will only be achieved through cooperation and solidarity among national mechanisms and institutions of social development.

SECTION III: DATA AND STATISTICS

Table (1) Students in public and private schools for the academic year 2017-2018

Sector	Type	Stage				
		Kindergarten	Primary Education	Preparatory Education	Secondary Education	Total
Public	Male	19.192	50.554	40.412	26.588	136.746
	Female	19.711	54.803	45.357	31.108	150.979
	Total	38.903	105.357	85.769	57.696	287.725
Private	Male	76.997	178.408	102.904	51.657	413.760
	Female	72.382	163.130	92.985	47.461	379.535
	Total	149.379	341.538	195.889	99.118	793.295
Total	Male	96.189	228.962	143.316	78.245	550.506
	Female	92.093	217.933	138.342	78.569	530.514
	Total	188.282	446.895	281.658	156.814	1.081.020

Table (2) National students in public and private higher education institutions in 2016-2017

Type of organization								
Public			Private			Total		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
11.166	31.962	43.128	5.270	3.640	8.910	16.436	35.602	52.038

Table (3) Global indicators for women in the UAE.

Order	Indicator	Ranking
1	Closing the Arab gender gap.	First
2	Lack of gender gap in enrollment in secondary education (under 15 years).	First
3	Closing the literacy gender gap.	First
4	Birth rate by sex within the health and safety axis.	First
5	Gender equal pay for same work – globally.	First
6	Tolerance of foreigners as stated in 3 international reports – globally.	First
7	Gender Property rights according to Legatum prosperity index.	First
8	Ratio of foreign students enrolled in higher education, according to INSEAD Global Innovation Index.	First
9	Ratio of primary education completion according to Legatum prosperity index - globally.	First

Table (4) Health indicators in the UAE.

Year	Indicator	value
2016	Mortality rate under -five (per 1000 live births)	7.76
2017	Life expectancy at birth - female	78.9
2017	Life expectancy at birth - male	76.7
2017	The percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel	100%
2017	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	6
2017	Sex ratio at birth.	0.944

SECTION IV: EMERGING PRIORITIES

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai launched the UAE's Centennial 2071 project, a comprehensive long-term vision which extends for five decades, and constitutes a clear map of government work to enhance the reputation of the state and its soft power.

The Centennial seeks to invest in young people, equip them with skills and knowledge that responds to rapid changes, and work to make the UAE the best country in the world by 2071, the centennial of the UAE establishment.

The UAE Centennial 2071 is based on four main axes:

Future Government: It is a government consciously managed in accordance with a long-term vision that seeks social well-being and provides positive messages to the world, following the adoption of the best experiences and practices emanating from the national strategy to strengthen the soft power of the state and ensure new and diversified sources of sustainable government revenues, beyond oil, and developing a mechanism to monitor changes in different sectors.

Education for the Future: This will enhance the level of teaching of advanced science and technology, especially in the areas of space, engineering, innovation, medical and health sciences, the consolidation of ethical values and positive attitudes, especially those that raise the level of professionalism in educational institutions, and develop mechanisms to explore individual talents among students from the earliest stages of schooling, and focus on enabling schools to be environment in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation, and transforming educational institutions in the country into global research centers.

A diversified knowledge economy: the UAE is ambitious enough to have an economy that can compete with the world's best economies. This can be done through the applying several mechanisms, including: increasing the productivity level in the national economy, supporting national companies to reach the world level, investing in research, and developing promising sectors, focusing on innovation, leadership and advanced industries, and developing a national economic and industrial strategy that looks forward to the future, and put the UAE among the most important economies in the world, and developing of a generation of

Emirati inventors and scientists, supporting their contribution to the development of science and technology, and coordinate and integrate with developed countries, improving the professional level of Emiratis, creating a new work culture, and promote the export of products and advanced national services around the world through specialized and intensive programs, and to support and encourage the growth of leading UAE companies.

A more cohesive society: This is achieved by consolidating the values of tolerance, humility, respect, and loyalty to the nation within the society, as well as empowering young men and women, having happiness and positivity a way of life, providing high quality in health and sport, and employing all human capacities in the means of solidarity and cooperation. It can also be creating awareness within families of the requirements of the next phase, and developing programs that render future generations that are able to give a good example of the UAE abroad, and more importantly, to increase the level of Emiratis cohesion around their homeland.

Its work program includes:

- Strengthening the reputation of the UAE.
- Diversifying revenues and ensuring that there are diversified sources of government revenues, beyond oil.
- Investing in education that focuses on advanced technology.
- Building a system of Emirati ethical values for future generations.
- Raising productivity in the national economy.
- Enhancing community cohesion.